



## Mesa County Regional Transportation Planning Office

### GVRTC Minutes for June 27, 2022

**Attendees:** Dana Brosig, Brevin Currier, Kathy Young, Eric Mocko, Rachel Peterson, Judi DeRusha, Kevin McNutt, Sarah Brooks, Nina Anderson, Michelle Olson, Alma Sekulich, Greg Caton, Renee Romero, Jason Smith, Mark Rogers, Kathy Hall, Kimberly Bullen, Dana Martinez, Valdon Lewis, Andy Gingerich, Todd Graesch, Rob Beck, Kaity Clark, Todd Hollenbeck

**Roll Call:** Scott McInnis, Chair – Mesa County, called the meeting to order. Greg Mikolai – Town of Palisade, Dennis Simpson – City of Grand Junction and Ken Kreie – City of Fruita are present.

**Call Meeting to Order:** 3:01p.m.

**Changes to the Agenda:** None

**Representative Reports:** Introduction of Ken Kreie. On Fruita council for 6 years. Works for the Department of Energy

**Transportation Commissioner Report:** Kathy Hall – passed mitigation measures so Front Range can meet Greenhouse Gas ruling and have already had amendments. The commission has been able to accelerate the projects within the 10 year plan since they had additional resources to spend. This is good for the contractors. However increase in costs is having an effect. Took a tour of where CDOT maintains their large equipment as well as make signs on the Front Range. Suggested keeping an eye on air quality requirements. Kathy Hall is no longer the Chair of the Transportation Commission. The new Chair is Don Stanton. However, Kathy Hall will continue to serve on the Transportation Commission.

**Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) Region 3 Update:** Jason Smith – Transportation Commission approved an additional \$31 million to Vail Pass project for the second bridge replacement so now both bridges will be replaced. Discussion of closures of Glenwood Canyon due to monsoon season and sending crews out there to close the roads if needed. A Hwy 82 rock slide occurred on the morning of June 27 on Independence Pass. Hwy 125 closed by Walden due to mudslides. Senate Bill 267 funding for year 4 will get final funding for US 6 & I-70B projects. Multimodal Transportation and Mitigation Options Fund (MMOF) and Revitalizing Main Street grants continue to be awarded. Starting to set up County meetings to cover updates on CDOT projects.

Asphalt challenges- Suncor is the only refinery in the state. Some asphalt comes from out of state. Having capacity issues from them, reaching out to other states already. When gas goes up, they make more gasoline and less asphalt products since it is less profitable. If there is a shortage of asphalt, how is priority determined? What commitments does CDOT have with contractors? Could have to cancel projects again this year. The rural and large quantity are the ones that usually are affected first.

CDOT was praised for positive comments received for the Palisade US 6 project. US 6 Clifton project-utility company in there right now before CDOT starts their part of the project.

Large equipment maintenance – are facilities available here? Yes, in Craig and Grand Junction. CDOT is short on mechanics. Less major repairs are done locally, larger repairs sent to Denver.

### **Approval of Minutes**

1. Adopt the minutes from the April 25, 2022 GVRTC Meeting. Scott McInnis asked for a motion. Greg Mikolai so moved and Dennis Simpson submitted a request to 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. Vote was 4-0 in favor.

### **Consent Item(s)**

The Consent Agenda is intended to allow the Committee to spend its time on more complex items. These items are generally perceived as non-controversial and can be approved by a single motion. The public or Committee Members may ask that an item be removed from the Consent Agenda for individual consideration.

None

### **Individual Consideration Item(s)**

Please limit public comment to a maximum of five (5) minutes per speaker (unless otherwise restricted by the Chair).

2. Election of the GVRTC Chair and Vice-Chair positions effective immediately. The majority vote of the Members present at the time of the vote will determine the officers – Scott McInnis, Chair

Scott McInnis term ends in January 2022 as County Commissioner. The Chair for a GVRTC position will last for one year and is not term limited.

Dennis Simpson nominated Greg Mikolai as the new Chair. Ken Kreie seconded the motion. Vote was 4-0 in favor.

Scott McInnis nominated Dennis Simpson for Vice Chair. Ken Kreie seconded the motion. Vote was 4-0 in favor.

Greg Mikolai took over as Chair of the meeting.

3. Middle and High School Student Pass Program and Kids Ride Free Promotion. Seeking approval to continue programs in order to increase youth ridership and utilize TANF funding.- Dana Brosig, RTPO

See binder documents. Discussion of chart of page 14. This pass program was approved about a year ago by the GVRTC. The Department of Human Services came to the RTPO to get more Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) passes out into the public so started student pass program. In 2021, 216 students signed up and 176 were reimbursed with TANF funds as they met the eligibility requirements. Jan-May, 2022, 242 students signed up and 149 were TANF eligible. GVT has seen an increase in ridership with these TANF passes/stickers. May-Dec 2021 5,500 riders. Jan-May 2022 11,500 rides.

With the student pass program, RTPO offered Kids Ride free under age 11 to cover the gap. 2021 263 rides per month to 337 rides per month in 2022.

There will be increased marketing. Requesting program continue next school year.

Public Comment - NONE

Greg Mikolai asked for a motion. Dennis Simpson so moved and Ken Kreie submitted a request to 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. Vote was 4-0 in favor.

4. Converting the Greyhound Full-Service Stop to an E-stop after July 2022– Dana Brosig, RTPO

See binder documents. RTPO had a contract with Greyhound to use the GVT Downtown facility and Transdev to bring on full time dispatcher to sell Greyhound tickets. Current contract ended 6/22/22 and Greyhound does not want to extend and instead wants to turn it into an e-stop. With board approval, staff offered reducing the contract, would be interested in full stop at \$70,000. Greyhound only wanted an e-stop for \$200 a month or \$2400 a year. Difference between full service and e-stop presented. Concern with only an e-stop, there will still be a great need for customer service and not be compensated for this work. If Greyhound moves, they will come out 7/12/22 and find new location to start 7/16/22.

Transdev currently has a dispatcher that was hired for Greyhound. This position would be removed from Transdev contract. Will this position be able to be transferred? Transdev will absorb this position. Do we know where they will move the stop? Greyhound is converting a lot of their stops to e-stops after being purchased by Flix. Bustang may have cut into Greyhounds business. Maybe Bustang should subsidized? Colorado used to subsidize Greyhound and they were still losing money so that's why state started Bustang. Bustang should be considering adding more routes. Maybe 20 people using Greyhound a day. RTPO staff did reach out to Bustang about if they were going to relocate since Greyhound is. They wanted to know the outcome of today's meetings. Bustang does have an interlining agreement with Greyhound.

Public Comment – none

Concerns with Greyhound moving as those riding the bus are in survival mode, or moving, or getting to a job. 50% of the traffic is e-ticket and the other is direct. Greyhound is not taking into consideration the amount of work staff does. Shipping of packages will be discontinued.

Staff will inform the members of the Local Coordinating Council of this change.

Greg Mikolai asked for a motion. Dennis Simpson moved to support staff recommendation to terminate the Greyhound contract. Ken Kreie submitted a request to 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. Vote was 4-0 in favor.

5. Approval of a recommendation to the Mesa County Board of County Commissioners to increase the 2022 Grand Valley Transit Operations contract with Transdev – Dana Brosig, RTPO

See binder documents. Staff presented information on the impacts of public transportation. Need to consider that we do provide service but it is not adequate and the benefits that could come with improved service. No one questions the importance of transit to this community and we are not talking about cutting transit service.

Discussion on Transdev request for a \$1.50 an hour increase staff effective 7/1/22. This would increase driver starting wages from \$15.50 to \$17 an hour. What about existing drivers? They would all get a \$1.50 increase from their current wage.

Transdev stated their turnover rate for the last year is at 52.3%. They have hired 26 people in last 12 months with only 14 making it out of training. 30 staff have gone to onto other jobs and higher pay was the biggest reason. Class B CDL job ranges from \$18-25 an hour and Transdev is competing with non-CDL jobs. Transdev has been 7 drivers short for the last year and doing all they can to get people in and trained. Inflation continues to climb and employees are on lower end of the pay scale. Lost an employee to a grocery store, other driving jobs, and self-employment. Have been able to maintain some of these employees as part time. Levels of overtime are not sustainable physically for the staff

and financially for Transdev. As Transdev prepared their proposal, they have made a couple of endeavors to take on some of the increase. Have held overhead costs flat. Transdev covering the costs of non-drivers and utility for the rest of the year.

GVRTC representatives appreciate Transdev's willingness to pick up the tab for on the non-driver and utility positions. Concern with what happens next. Last year, Transdev made a proposal and tried to get higher wages. Interested in a plan on what will work. Do not want to be here a year from now and continue to have turn over and ask GVRTC to pay what the market is.

Transdev is under a contractual obligation and municipalities will need to come up with the additional funds. Technically, Transdev should be covering the entire cost but does not object to burden sharing. \$18,000 being picked up by Transdev and GVRTC is picking up \$72,000, even if some federally funded. Most of the people in this community don't have an employer who can keep up with inflation. Municipalities have budgets too. Feel for the drivers and we are all in this boat together. In 2023, clear understanding that Transdev needs to stick to their proposal.

Transdev is on a year-to-year renewal and negotiate a one year extension. Transdev is not violating their agreement. They can walk. How important is this service to us and are we willing to do what it takes to maintain and improve the services? GVRTC doesn't want to look for another contractor. Are we willing to pay for what it takes for services for our community? We have to have the attitude this is our problems to solve and Transdev doesn't really need us.

GVRTC and Transdev are under a renewed contract and it expires in December 2022 and then negotiate for 2023. We have an agreement, what is Transdev's burden sharing? Transdev has the leverage and performs an excellent service and want to keep this relationship healthy. This isn't the first time Transdev has come back mid-year. The question is burden sharing.

City of Grand Junction pays \$19 an hour for a temporary with a CDL. We want a good transit system and for Transdev to not be fearful when they tell us what it is going to cost.

We know 2023 costs are going to increase and understand we are going to have to negotiate this. CDL comparisons-need to be careful. At the County, we have highly trained mechanics who need a CDL to move the bus.

Discussion of the projected versus actual costs in 2022. The existing IGA will be able to cover the local costs for increased wages in 2022. \$72,000 total increase.

The real issue is the 2022 contract. Going into 2023, really need to look at wages and what is it going to take. Do not believe \$17.50 is going to do it. What is it going to take and have a strategy is what Transdev needs to so do not have to do a contract amendment mid-year in 2023.

#### Public Comment

- Nina Anderson-Express Employment Professionals-understand your concerns with the contract. Talking to GVRTC as an employer. I also am a service provider and cover employees and overhead. 2020 & 2021 have not been like other years. COVID pay, Family Medical Leave and Colorado bases their rates on CPI. Employer's response to market indicators quickly. While it is mid-year, encourage the GVRTC to consider this increase. Wages are \$17.72 for a Class B, Class A is \$25.
- Michelle Olson-represent 200 Human Resources clients. This is what the nation is facing. The great resignation is nothing we've experienced. 7.4% of Colorado's population has quit and that's just through Sept 2021. Resignation is across the nation but highest in

- Colorado. With many employees leaving because of wages. There have been a lot of changes legislative wise. Sounds like Transdev is doing what they should as an employer.
- o Alma Sekulich-Innovative Textiles employee. They are giving out gas cards for their employees. This isn't something we looked at first of the year. How can I advise employees to take the bus if we don't have bus drivers? How are you going to entice drivers to get in the door? Paying them the wages. Our own government is perpetuating this increase. If you can take the bus to work on Riverside, you could have 200 people riding the bus every day. We have to have reliable transportation. We all got hit hard but I don't think we could have anticipated it.

Scott-following the recommendation Dana has put out. 6<sup>th</sup> Addendum Page 25 of language

Greg Mikolai asked for a motion. Scott McInnis moved to increase existing 2022 Transdev contract amount by \$72,775 in order to increase salary of drivers, utility workers and Lead Utility position by \$1.50/hr for the remainder of 2022. Ken Kreie seconded the motion. Vote was 4-0 in favor.

### **Briefing Item(s)**

Briefing items are intended to allow the Committee to give Staff guidance in the day-to-day operations of the Regional Transportation Planning Office, or to hear general presentations from others.

6. Briefing on the Transdev request for 2023 (Option Year 7) Operations Contract – Dana Brosig, RTPO  
See binder documents. Discussion on what Transdev is proposing for 2023. What is Transdev's strategy to keep drivers? Is a 3.5% increase for drivers appropriate or what is appropriate? Look at what to pay drivers instead of an across the board increase.

Contract increase is proposed at 8.5%. Need to ensure we do not interfere with Transdev's contract with Union. Current Union contract goes through December 2023. What is the impact going to be for our partners split when subsidies end related to CARES Act funds? Discussion of the history of IGA since 2019. \$1.65 million is 2023 estimate. In 2023, due to cost savings, carrying IGA funds from 2022 into Capital for 2023. It will increase in 2024 for Capital funds. For our model did a 2% increase for fleet maintenance, but may need to confirm what increases may come with mechanic wages.

Questions regarding CNG fueling costs. We have a set rate for CNG, which has saved us money as gas prices have gone up.. Part of the CNG rate is a pay back to the system. Not sure when this pay back ends.

Discussion of staff meeting with the jurisdiction managers and bringing the 2023 contract proposal back to the GVRTC for a recommendation.

7. Briefing on developing a Grand Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization Intergovernmental Agreement for funding of GVMPO functions.- Dana Brosig, RTPO  
See binder documents. In the past, Mesa County has never had a formal IGA for the MPO and staff would like to formalize it with an IGA. There has not been an increase in these contributions. With the Greenhouse Gas rule, there is additional modeling requirements, which affects the travel demand model and regional transportation plan (RTP). Transit is not currently in the travel model and it needs to be added which will increase the cost of the model. Transportation Commission has approved additional funding for modeling of \$200,000 but need additional funds to cover the model in 2023 and RTP in 2024.

Will need to work with all the partners and legal counsel regarding this new IGA which is modeled after the GVT IGA.

8. GVT Fleet Maintenance Facility Update – Dana Brosig, RTPPO  
See binder documents.
9. GVT Operations Report for May 2022 – Valdon Lewis, Transdev/GVT  
See binder documents. Still comparing ridership current #'s to 2019 pre-pandemic. Held their first in person safety meeting in May. Discussion of safety incidents for May. Have hired 2<sup>nd</sup> utility worker a week and half ago. Still 7 drivers short.
10. Introduction of New Staff – Dana Brosig, RTPPO  
Brevin Currier-new Transit Coordinator. Andrew Gingerich has been promoted to Transit Planner. Rob Beck has returned as CDOT's Region 3 West Engineer.

If we had 7 drivers, how would that affect ridership? How have the service reductions affected ridership? With driver shortage, had to reduce service for DASH and Saturday's. If have all drivers, would be able to return service.

During JUCO, caught the bus on Horizon Drive to watch two games. Driver was very nice. Very hard to plan your schedule when only run every hour. Need to increase service to 1/2 hour service on most frequently used route.

When we decreased Saturday service, looked at ridership by hour and cut the hours that would affect the least amount of riders. In the past, have provided 1/2 hour service for JUCO but not able to provide this in 2022.

Ridership for November 2021 on is seeing a 20% increase.

**Unscheduled Business:**

The Unscheduled Business portion of the agenda provides an opportunity for the public to speak about issues that were not on the main agenda. Please limit public comment to a maximum of five (5) minutes per speaker (unless otherwise restricted by the Chair). Testimony relating to scheduled agenda items will not be allowed during Unscheduled Business. The purpose of the Unscheduled Business portion is for the Grand Valley Regional Transportation Committee to listen to the public. The Committee Members do not generally engage in debate or make comments during the Unscheduled Business portion.

None.

**Meeting Adjourned: 5:00p.m.:** Minutes submitted by Kathy Young.